

*REMARKS/ARGUMENTS*

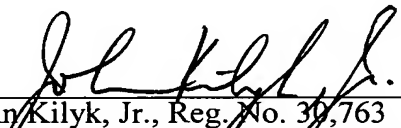
The claims have been amended to place the claims in a format more consistent with U.S. patent practice by removing instances of multiply-dependent claims that are dependent on other multiply-dependent claims.

In particular, dependent claims 2, 3, and 4 have been rewritten in independent form. Claim 5 (which was previously multiply dependent on original claims 1-4) has been made solely dependent on claim 1, and new claim 8 has been added to be similar to claim 5 except multiply dependent on new claims 2-4. Dependent claim 6 (which was previously multiply dependent on original claims 1-5) has been made solely dependent on claim 1, and new claim 9 has been added to be similar to claim 6 except multiply dependent on claims 2-5. Dependent claim 7 (which was previously multiply dependent on original claims 1-6) has been made solely dependent on claim 1, and new claim 10 has been added to be similar to claim 7 except multiply dependent on claims 2-6. Accordingly, no new matter has been added by way of these claim amendments.

Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims directed to any appropriate subject matter, whether previously claimed or unclaimed, in this and/or related patent applications in accordance with U.S. patent practice.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: September 30, 2005